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DEPARTMENT OF STATE



Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: September 27, 1959
12:15 p.m.

SUBJECT: US Views on the Communique

PARTICIPANTS: The President
The Secretary of State C-AH
Mr. Dillon Gen. Goodpaster
Mr. Merchant Mr. Hagerty
Mr. Gates Mr. Berding
Mr. Kohler

COPIES TO:

S/S The White House - Gen. Goodpaster
G - Mr. Merchant Amembassy Moscow, Amb. Thompson
C - Mr. Reinhardt
EUR - Mr. Kohler
P - Mr. Berding

Following a private session with Chairman Khrushchev the President came into Secretary Herter's room where most of the American group was gathered and reported on the results of this conversation.

The President said that Khrushchev wanted a communique. He said this should be item by item as respects Berlin. We would not say that we would make permanent the occupation status in Berlin. We were both ready to negotiate on a Berlin settlement which would be acceptable to West Berlin, to East and West Germany and to the European countries. The President said it had been made clear that there would be no summit meeting under any kind of duress. He simply would not participate under such conditions. He had agreed with the Chairman that disarmament was the most important single problem. He said that Mr. Khrushchev had explained that the two governments had understood differently the Soviet initiative in Berlin last November. The U. S. had mistakenly thought that Khrushchev was delivering an ultimatum. The President reported that he had said he would not go to a summit meeting if what he and the Chairman said, at least among themselves if not publicly, did not make clear that there was no aspect of duress. He said that he added that he could not comment for or commit his associates. The President said Khrushchev had replied that without regard to a date the

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Soviets would negotiate to get a solution to Berlin which would be acceptable to all concerned. Khrushchev had added that the Soviets regarded a peace treaty as the "right way". The President commented that he saw no choice but to resume negotiations so long as we in fact say we do not seek a perpetuation of the situation in Berlin; clearly we did not contemplate 50 years in occupation there.

The President said he had told Khrushchev that he would rather have a summit meeting for negotiations on the subject of disarmament if we were both ready to negotiate on this question. In this sense he had made Berlin a catalyst.

Finally the President reported that he and Mr. Khrushchev had agreed that his visit to the Soviet Union would take place in May or June.

There was some general discussion as to the broad lines of a communique indicating the President and Secretary's views that this should cover the following lines:

1. General disarmament is the primary problem.
2. On Berlin we would seek a solution acceptable to all the people concerned.
3. There had been no agreements of substance.
4. Our understanding on the negotiations that they should be honestly and earnestly free of threat.
5. The Moscow visit will take place next spring.

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